

Co-chairs Senator McCrory and Representative Currey, Ranking Members Representative McCarty and Representative Berthel, and distinguished members of the Education Committee:

My name is Alisha Estrada and I live in New Britain, CT . I am testifying in support of S.B. 1095: An Act Concerning School Resource Officers.

All students deserve to feel safe, secure, and supported in their places of learning. Yet too often our schools rely on policing to keep children in line, rather than funding professionals trained to deliver students necessary developmental and behavioral health resources.

As a senior in high school, I still don't understand the point of SRO's in my school. About a month ago, as I was coming into school in the morning, I recognized my friend was walking in front of me on the sidewalk. A group of boys approached him trying to get him to react. I'm still walking behind him at a distance but everything happened so quick that I didn't know what was happening. When he didn't show a reaction, they all started punching him. At this point, they were in the middle of the street. He was alone. I froze for what felt like hours. I didn't know what to do so I started yelling for help. The guards showed up about 5 minutes after, while he was still getting hit. By then, he could've been honestly beaten to death. This was terrifying to watch, no one was helping him. The kids were recording and everyone was pushing each other. I couldn't see what was going on anymore and I honestly felt like crying. I was hyperventilating and my anxiety was so bad that I felt like I was going through an out of body experience. One of the worst ways to start your school day is by watching your friend get jumped while absolutely no one cared or tried to help and it took the guards forever to get there. There is no reason to be funding police or guards when there is literally no support.

According to research by [Connecticut Voices for Children](#), there's no evidence School Resource Officers (SROs) make students or staff safer, but schools with SROs have more arrests and more expulsions than their peer institutions without SROs.

I strongly support S.B. 1095. I hope the Committee and Connecticut lawmakers will vote in favor of this bill. Together, we can build an educational system that centers students' social-emotional well-being through care, resources, learning, and restoration.

Thank you for your time,

Alisha Estrada